



# Stability of wormholes in Horndeski theories

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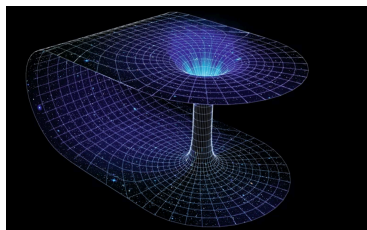
# Key statements of the talk

- Horndeski theories and their generalisations are suitable frameworks for traversable wormholes  
(modified gravity instead of exotic matter)
- Stability at the level of perturbations requires special attention  
(ghosts and tachyons are around the corner)
- Stability analysis for dynamical wormholes – work in progress

Based on: 2212.05969, 2404.06297, 2406.xxxx

# Traversable wormholes and their stability

Einstein, Rosen (1935), Wheeler (1962), Ellis (1973), Bronnikov (1973), Morris, Thorne (1988)



- The non-trivial feature of traversable wormholes: the necessity to fill the throat with matter, which violates the NEC/NCC
- Different options for supporting the throat: quantum effects (for microscopic wormholes), phantom scalar field, modified gravity
- One of the approaches to modifying gravity is to add extra DOFs, e.g. coupling GR to a scalar field  $\rightarrow$  Scalar-tensor theories

# Generalized Galileon a.k.a. Horndeski theory and beyond

*Horndeski (1974)*

*Deffayet, Gao, Steer, Zahariade (2011)*

*Zumalacárregui, García-Bellido (2014)*

*Gleyzes, Langlois, Piazza, Vernizzi (2015)*

$$S = \int d^4x \sqrt{-g} (\mathcal{L}_2 + \mathcal{L}_3 + \mathcal{L}_4 + \mathcal{L}_5 + \mathcal{L}_{\mathcal{BH}}),$$

$$\mathcal{L}_2 = F(\pi, X),$$

$$\mathcal{L}_3 = K(\pi, X) \square \pi,$$

$$\mathcal{L}_4 = -G_4(\pi, X) R + 2G_{4X}(\pi, X) [(\square \pi)^2 - \pi_{;\mu\nu} \pi^{;\mu\nu}],$$

$$\mathcal{L}_5 = G_5(\pi, X) G^{\mu\nu} \pi_{;\mu\nu} + \frac{1}{3} G_{5X} [(\square \pi)^3 - 3 \square \pi \pi_{;\mu\nu} \pi^{;\mu\nu} + 2 \pi_{;\mu\nu} \pi^{;\mu\rho} \pi_{;\rho}{}^{\nu}],$$

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{L}_{\mathcal{BH}} = & F_4(\pi, X) \epsilon^{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} \epsilon^{\mu'\nu'\rho'\sigma'} \pi_{;\mu} \pi_{;\mu'} \pi_{;\nu\nu'} \pi_{;\rho\rho'} \\ & + F_5(\pi, X) \epsilon^{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} \epsilon^{\mu'\nu'\rho'\sigma'} \pi_{;\mu} \pi_{;\mu'} \pi_{;\nu\nu'} \pi_{;\rho\rho'} \pi_{;\sigma\sigma'}. \end{aligned}$$

$\pi$  is a scalar field,  $X = g^{\mu\nu} \pi_{;\mu} \pi_{;\nu}$ ,  $\pi_{;\mu} = \partial_\mu \pi$ ,  $\pi_{;\mu\nu} = \nabla_\nu \nabla_\mu \pi$ ,  $\square \pi = g^{\mu\nu} \nabla_\nu \nabla_\mu \pi$ ,  $G_{iX} = \partial G_i / \partial X$ .

- Healthy NEC/NCC violation
- Stability issue: pathological DOFs may show up on the level of perturbations

# Types of instabilities

- Consider a spherically-symmetric scalar field  $\pi = \pi_0(r) + \chi(t, r)$  in Minkowski space:

$$\delta^2 S = \int d^4x \left[ \frac{1}{2} U(r) \dot{\chi}^2 - \frac{1}{2} V(r) (\partial_i \chi)^2 - \frac{1}{2} W(r) \chi^2 \right].$$

- Dispersion relation and energy density for  $\chi$ :

$$U\omega^2 = V\mathbf{p}^2 + W,$$

$$T_{00} = \frac{1}{2} U \dot{\chi}^2 + \frac{1}{2} V (\partial_i \chi)^2 + \frac{1}{2} W \chi^2$$

- Stable background:**  $U > 0$ ,  $V > 0$ ,  $W \geq 0$
- Ghost instability:  $U < 0$ ,  $V < 0$  (quantum-mechanically unstable background)
- Gradient instability (imaginary  $\omega$  at high  $p$ ):  
 $U > 0$ ,  $V < 0$  or  $U < 0$ ,  $V > 0$
- Tachyonic instability (imaginary  $\omega$  at low  $p$ ):  $U > 0$ ,  $V > 0$ ,  $W < 0$

# Stability issues in Horndeski theories: no-go theorem

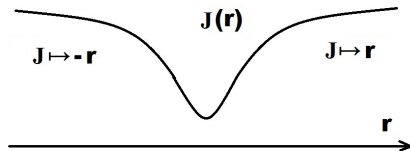
- Wormholes in  $\mathcal{L}_3$  are always plagued with ghost (no-go theorem in  $\mathcal{L}_3$ ):

$$\mathcal{L}_3 = -\frac{1}{2\kappa}R + F(\pi, X) + K(\pi, X)\square\pi$$

*Rubakov, 2016 (1601.06566)*

- No-go theorem is still valid for  $\mathcal{L}_3$  + conventional scalar  
*Kolevatov, Mironov, 2016 (1607.04099)*
- No-go theorem for wormholes in Horndeski theories: *static, spherically symmetric wormholes suffer from ghost instabilities in some region of space around them*  
*Evseev, Melichev, 2018 (1711.04152)*
- Evading the no-go theorem for wormholes in beyond Horndeski theory  
*Franciolini, Hui, Santoni, Trischerini, 2019*  
*Mironov, Rubakov, VV, 2019*

# Wormhole: static background setup



- Static, spherically-symmetric wormhole:

$$ds^2 = -A(r) dt^2 + \frac{dr^2}{B(r)} + J^2(r) (d\theta^2 + \sin^2 \theta d\varphi^2)$$

where

$$A(r) \geq A_{min} > 0, \quad B(r) \geq B_{min} > 0, \quad J(r) \geq R_{min} > 0$$

- Asymptotically flat geometry
- Background Galileon field  $\pi(r)$  – static and spherically-symmetric

*Stable solutions* are free from any kind of pathological DOFs among linear perturbations, i.e. ghosts, gradient instabilities, tachyons

# Perturbations about a wormhole

- 2+1 DOFs: 1 odd-parity and 2 even-parity modes (w.r.t. 2D reflection)
- Odd-parity sector ( $Q$ ):

$$S_{\text{odd}}^{(2)} = \int dt dr \sqrt{\frac{B}{A}} J^2 \cdot \left[ \frac{\mathcal{H}^2}{A\mathcal{G}} \dot{Q}^2 - \frac{B\mathcal{H}^2}{\mathcal{F}} (Q')^2 - \frac{\ell(\ell+1)}{J^2} \cdot \mathcal{H}Q^2 - V(r)Q^2 \right]$$

- Even-parity sector ( $v_i$ ,  $i = 1, 2$ ):

$$S_{\text{even}}^{(2)} = \int dt dr \sqrt{\frac{A}{B}} J^2 \left( \frac{1}{2} \mathcal{K}_{ij} \dot{v}^i \dot{v}^j - \frac{1}{2} \mathcal{G}_{ij} v^{i'} v^{j'} - \mathcal{Q}_{ij} v^i v^{j'} - \frac{1}{2} \ell^2 \mathcal{M}_{(\ell^2)ij} v^i v^j - \frac{1}{2} \mathcal{M}_{ij} v^i v^j \right)$$

## Stability conditions (high energy modes)

No ghosts:  $\mathcal{G} > 0$ ,  $\mathcal{K}_{11} > 0$ ,  $\det(\mathcal{K}) > 0$ ,

No radial gradient instabilities:  $\mathcal{F} > 0$ ,  $\mathcal{G}_{11} > 0$ ,  $\det(\mathcal{G}) > 0$ ,

No angular gradient instabilities:  $\mathcal{H} > 0$ ,  $\mathcal{M}_{(\ell^2)11} > 0$ ,  $\det(\mathcal{M}_{(\ell^2)}) > 0$ .



# No-go theorem and its circumvention

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The no-go theorem in Horndeski theory is based on the no-ghost constraint for even-parity sector:

$$\det \mathcal{K} \sim \mathcal{F} \left( 2 \frac{d\xi}{dr} - \mathcal{F} \right) > 0$$

$\Rightarrow$

$$\xi = \frac{(J\mathcal{H})^2}{\Theta}$$

- Key requirement:  $\xi$  has to cross zero

*Franciolini, Hui, Santoni, Trischerini, 2019*

*Mironov, Rubakov, VV, 2019*

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$$\det \mathcal{K} \sim \mathcal{F} \left( 2 \frac{d\xi}{dr} - \mathcal{F} \right) > 0 \quad \Rightarrow \quad \det \mathcal{K} \sim \mathcal{F} \left( 2 \frac{d\tilde{\xi}}{dr} - \mathcal{F} \right) > 0$$
$$\xi = \frac{(J\mathcal{H})^2}{\Theta} \quad \tilde{\xi} = \frac{J^2 \mathcal{H} (\mathcal{H} - \mathcal{D})}{\Theta}$$

- Key requirement:  $\xi$  has to cross zero
- One evades the no-go by going beyond Horndeski thanks to a new contribution  $\mathcal{D}(F_4, F_5)$

*Franciolini, Hui, Santoni, Trincherini, 2019*

*Mironov, Rubakov, VV, 2019*

# Stable wormhole: reverse engineering

- Choose a specific wormhole metric:

$$ds^2 = -A(r) dt^2 + \frac{dr^2}{B(r)} + J^2(r) (d\theta^2 + \sin^2 \theta d\varphi^2)$$
$$A = 1, \quad B = 1 + 2 \operatorname{sech} \left( \frac{r}{r_{min}} \right), \quad J = \ln \left[ 1 + 2 \cosh \left( \frac{r}{r_{min}} \right) \right].$$

and the Galileon field profile:

$$\pi_0(r) = \tanh \left( \frac{r}{r_{min}} \right) - 1, \quad \rightarrow \quad X = -\frac{\operatorname{sech} \left( \frac{r}{r_{min}} \right)^4}{2 \left( 1 + \operatorname{sech} \left( \frac{r}{r_{min}} \right) \right)}$$

- Take an Ansatz for Lagrangian functions as a power series of  $X$ :

$$F(\pi, X) = f_0(\pi) + f_1(\pi) \cdot X + f_2(\pi) \cdot X^2,$$

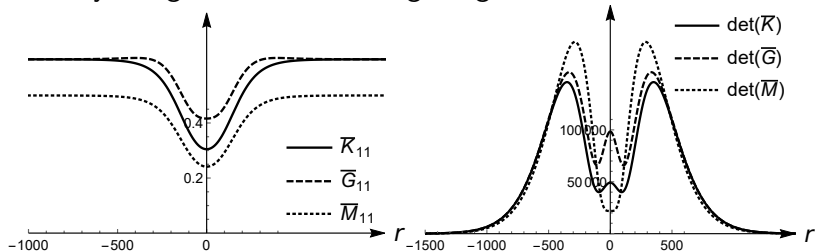
$$G_4(\pi, X) = \frac{1}{2} + g_{40}(\pi) + g_{41}(\pi) \cdot X,$$

$$F_4(\pi, X) = f_{40}(\pi) + f_{41}(\pi) \cdot X$$

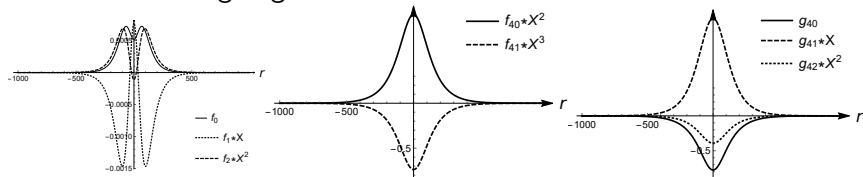
- Reconstruct the functions  $f_i$ ,  $g_{4i}$  and  $f_{4i}$  by satisfying:  
(a) background equations of motion (b) stability conditions

# Semi-stable wormhole: an example

- Stability: no ghost, radial and angular gradient instabilities



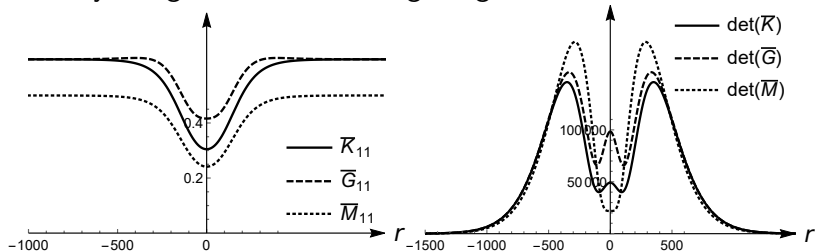
- Reconstructed Lagrangian functions:



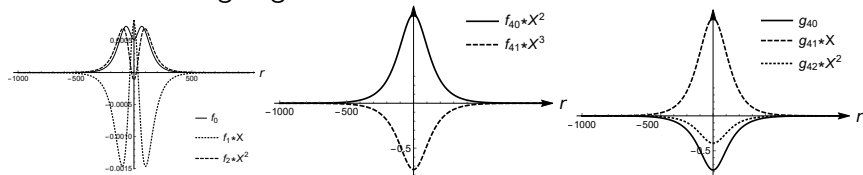
*There exists a wormhole solution that is stable w.r.t. high energy perturbations*

# Semi-stable wormhole: an example

- Stability: no ghost, radial and angular gradient instabilities



- Reconstructed Lagrangian functions:



There exists a wormhole solution that is stable w.r.t. high energy perturbations  $\rightarrow$  *what about low energy modes?*

# Complete stability: tachyons

$$S_{\text{odd}}^{(2)} = \int dt dr \sqrt{\frac{B}{A}} J^2 \cdot \left[ \frac{\mathcal{H}^2}{AG} \dot{Q}^2 - \frac{B\mathcal{H}^2}{\mathcal{F}} (Q')^2 - \frac{\ell(\ell+1)}{J^2} \cdot \mathcal{H}Q^2 - V(r)Q^2 \right],$$
$$S_{\text{even}}^{(2)} = \int dt dr \sqrt{\frac{A}{B}} J^2 \left( \frac{1}{2} \mathcal{K}_{ij} \dot{v}^i \dot{v}^j - \frac{1}{2} \mathcal{G}_{ij} v^{i'} v^{j'} - \mathcal{Q}_{ij} v^i v^{j'} - \frac{1}{2} \ell^2 \mathcal{M}_{(\ell^2)ij} v^i v^j - \frac{1}{2} \mathcal{M}_{ij} v^i v^j \right)$$

## Complete set of stability conditions

No ghosts:  $\mathcal{G} > 0$ ,  $\mathcal{K}_{22} > 0$ ,  $\det \mathcal{K} > 0$ ,

No radial gradient instabilities:  $\mathcal{F} > 0$ ,  $\mathcal{G}_{22} > 0$ ,  $\det \mathcal{G} > 0$ ,

No angular gradient instabilities or tachyons:  $\mathcal{H} > 0$ ,  $V(r) > -\frac{6\mathcal{H}}{J^2}$ ,

$$\mathcal{M}_{22} > 0, \quad \det \mathcal{G} \cdot \det \mathcal{M} > \frac{\mathcal{Q}_{12}}{4} \mathcal{M}_{22} \cdot \mathcal{G}_{11}$$

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$$\mathcal{M}_{22} > 0, \quad \det \mathcal{G} \cdot \det \mathcal{M} > \frac{\mathcal{Q}_{12}}{4} \mathcal{M}_{22} \cdot \mathcal{G}_{11}$$

- The existing solution still was not checked w.r.t. to tachyons
- *This set of stability constraints applies to an arbitrary spherically-symmetric solutions within general beyond Horndeski theory*

# Superluminality problem

$$S_{odd}^{(2)} = \int dt dr \sqrt{\frac{B}{A}} J^2 \cdot \left[ \frac{\mathcal{H}^2}{AG} \dot{Q}^2 - \frac{B\mathcal{H}^2}{\mathcal{F}} (Q')^2 - \frac{\ell(\ell+1)}{J^2} \cdot \mathcal{H}Q^2 - V(r)Q^2 \right],$$
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## Propagation speeds

Odd-parity modes:  $c_r^2 = \frac{\mathcal{G}}{\mathcal{F}}, \quad c_\theta^2 = \frac{\mathcal{G}}{\mathcal{H}},$

Even-parity modes (radial):  $c_r^2$  are eigenvalues of  $\mathcal{K}^{-1}\mathcal{G},$

Even-parity modes (angular):  $c_\theta^2$  are eigenvalues of  $\mathcal{K}^{-1}\mathcal{M}_{(\ell^2)}$



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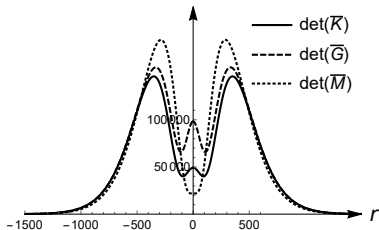
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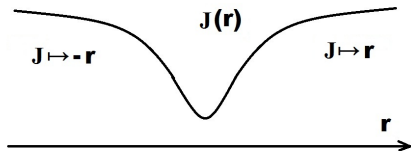
Even-parity modes (angular):  $c_{\theta,1,2}^2$  are eigenvalues of  $\mathcal{K}^{-1}\mathcal{M}_{(\ell^2)}$

$$c_{a1}^2 \cdot c_{a2}^2 = \frac{J^4}{A^2} \frac{\det \mathcal{M}_{(\ell^2)}}{\det \mathcal{K}}$$

One of the sound speeds  $c_a^2 > 1.$



# Wormhole: dynamical background setup



- Dynamical spherically-symmetric setting:

$$ds^2 = -A(\mathbf{t}, r) dt^2 + \frac{dr^2}{B(\mathbf{t}, r)} + J^2(\mathbf{t}, r) (d\theta^2 + \sin^2 \theta d\varphi^2)$$

where

$$A(\mathbf{t}, r) \geq A_{min} > 0, \quad B(\mathbf{t}, r) \geq B_{min} > 0, \quad J(\mathbf{t}, r) \geq R_{min} > 0$$

- Time-dependent background scalar field  $\pi(\mathbf{t}, r)$
- Motivation:
  - stability analysis for dynamical black hole solutions
  - wormhole in a cosmological setting
  - a "Universe in the laboratory" scenario

# Perturbations about a dynamical wormhole

- Modification of the odd-parity sector (sole DOF –  $Q$ ):

$$S_{odd,static}^{(2)} = \int dt dr \sqrt{\frac{B}{A}} J^2 \cdot \left[ \frac{\mathcal{H}^2}{A\mathcal{G}} \dot{Q}^2 - \frac{B\mathcal{H}^2}{\mathcal{F}} (Q')^2 - \frac{\ell(\ell+1)}{J^2} \cdot \mathcal{H}Q^2 - V(r)Q^2 \right]$$

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- New coefficient  $\mathcal{D}$  is non-trivial only in dynamical case

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- New coefficient  $\mathcal{D}$  is non-trivial only in dynamical case

## Stability conditions (high energy modes)

$$\text{No ghosts: } \mathcal{G} > 0 \quad \longrightarrow \quad \frac{\mathcal{F}}{A \cdot \mathcal{G}\mathcal{F} + B \cdot \mathcal{D}^2} > 0$$

$$\text{No radial gradient instabilities: } \mathcal{F} > 0 \quad \longrightarrow \quad \mathcal{F} > -\frac{B \mathcal{D}^2}{A \mathcal{G}}$$

$$\text{No angular gradient instabilities: } \mathcal{H} > 0$$

# Conclusion and outlook

- There are no completely stable static, spherically symmetric wormholes in Horndeski theory
- It is possible in principle to construct a wormhole free from ghosts and gradient instabilities in beyond Horndeski theory (also in DHOST)
- Universal set of stability constraints is developed for an arbitrary static, spherically-symmetric solution in beyond Horndeski theory
- Stability analysis for *dynamical* spherically-symmetric setting in beyond Horndeski theory – in progress (even sector, no-go theorem?)

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**Thank you for your attention!**

